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**IN THE
COURT OF APPEALS OF INDIANA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE INVOLUNTARY
TERMINATION OF THE PARENT CHILD
RELATIONSHIP OF D.D., MINOR
CHILD, AND HELENA WILLIAMS (MOTHER)
AND DEMOND DAVIS, SR., (FATHER)

HELENA WILLIAMS AND DEMOND DAVIS, SR.,

Appellants-Respondents,

VS.

VANDERBURGH COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CHILD
SERVICES,

Appellee-Petitioner.

No. 82A01-0612-JV-533

APPEAL FROM THE VANDERBURGH SUPERIOR COURT

The Honorable Brett J. Niemeier, Judge

Cause No. 82D01-0603-JT-34

June 21, 2007

MEMORANDUM DECISION - NOT FOR PUBLICATION

KIRSCH, Judge

Helena Williams (“Mother”) and Demond Davis, Sr., (“Father”) appeal the termination of the parent-child relationship with their daughter, D.D., upon petition of the Vanderburgh County Department of Child Services, (“DCS”). The dispositive issue is whether the trial court erred when it failed to issue written findings of fact and conclusions thereon in support of the termination.

We vacate this case and remand it with instructions for the trial court to issue a written order that includes findings of fact and conclusions thereon in support of the termination.

FACTS AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On October 9, 2006, the trial court entered the following chronological case summary entry terminating Mother and Father’s parental rights:

Comes now the Court and having had this matter under advisement now finds the Department has proven the allegations of the petition by clear and convincing evidence; that it is in the best interest and welfare of the child that parental rights be terminated; Court orders parental rights of the mother and father terminated at this time; child is free for adoption.

Appellants’ App. at 3. Mother and Father appeal the termination.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION

Mother and Father argue that the trial court erred when it failed to issue a written termination order. According to Mother and Father, “[w]ithout a written [order], it is unclear whether the court found that the [DCS] had established each statutory element by clear and convincing evidence as required by the State and the U.S. Constitution.” *Appellants’ Br.* at 18.

Our legislature has enacted an interlocking statutory scheme governing children in need of services (“CHINS”) and the involuntary termination of parental rights. *A.P. v. Porter*

County Office of Family and Children, 734 N.E.2d 1107, 1112 (Ind. Ct. App. 2000), *trans. denied*. Although involuntary termination proceedings are distinct from CHINS proceedings, an involuntary termination proceeding is governed by the procedures described by the CHINS statutes contained in Indiana Code Article 31-34. *Id.* Indiana Code Section 31-34-19-10 requires a CHINS dispositional decree to include written findings and conclusions upon the record. Because the statutory requirement also applies to an involuntary termination proceeding, an involuntary termination order must include written findings and conclusions as well. The termination of parental rights is such a serious matter that we insist that the procedural mandates of the CHINS and involuntary termination statutes be followed strictly. *A.P.*, 734 N.E.2d at 1118.

We therefore vacate this appeal and remand this case to the trial court with instructions for the court to enter a written termination order that includes findings of fact and conclusions thereon in support of the termination.

Vacated and remanded.

DARDEN, J., and MATHIAS, J., concur.